

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 09093 091038Z

43

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 /042 W

----- 117020

R 090900Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1636

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

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DEPT ALSO PASS COMMERCE

CASABLANCA FOR RCAA

E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, BEXP, TS

SUBJ: CIVIL AVIATION--TUNIS AIR FLEET EXPANSION PROGRAM

REF : 75 TUNIS 6312

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: NEW TUNIS AIR ROUTE AND EQUIPMENT
PLANS ARE REPORTED TO CALL FOR TOTAL FLEET OF 12-15 BOEING
727'S AND AT LEAST TWO WIDE-BODY AIRCRAFT BY 1980. TWO
727'S WILL BE PURCHASED IN 1976, BRINGING TOTAL TO SEVEN.
THUS, FIVE TO SEVEN ADDITIONAL 727'S WOULD BE PURCHASED BY
1980. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN L.O.U.: COMMERCIAL VISITOR REPORTED THAT TUNIS AIR
DECISION ON WIDE-BODY AIRCRAFT HAS DEFINITELY NARROWED TO
MCDONNELL DOUGLAS DC-10-10 AND A-300 AIRBUS. ON BASIS
CURRENT ROUTE STRUCTURE, AIRBUS STRONG COMPETITOR BUT WOULD
FACE DIFFICULTY IN HADJ SEASON ATTEMPTING NON-STOP SERVICE
TO JIDDA. DC-10-10 WELL SUTIED TO ROUTE AND HADJ REQUIRE-
MENTS BUT FACES SERVICE PROBLEM DUE SMALL NUMBER (5)
SERIES 10'S IN EUROPE. PRATT/WHITNEY TRYING TO CONVINCE
TUNIS AIR THAT FUTURE EQUIPMENT FLEXIBILITY WOULD BE GREATER
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WITH SLIGHTLY MORE EXPENSIVE LONG-RANGE VERSION DC-10-40

EQUIPPED WITH P/W ENGINES. SERIES 40 REPORTEDLY WOULD HAVE FEWER SERVICE PROBLEMS THAN SERIES 10 SINCE P/W ENGINE ALSO USED ON 747. REPORTED THAT SERIES 40 HAS BEEN OFFERED AT \$26 MILLION. INFORMATION FROM TUNIS AIR SOURCES INDICATE THAT TECHNICAL SECTION WOULD PREFER P/W ENGINE AS RESULT THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH 727' , WHEREAS PLANNING AND ROUTES SECTION PREFERS DC-10-10.

3. FRENCH EMBASSY OFFICIALS ARE MARKEDLY MORE OPTIMISTIC ON CHANCES OF AIRBUS THAN THEY WERE SEVERAL MONTHS AGO. IT IS REPORTED THAT HIGH LEVEL REPRESENTATIVE OF AIRBUS INDUSTRIES VISITED TUNISIA IN EARLY JANUARY, CONFERRING WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA AMON OTHERS. GIVEN APPARENT PREFERENCE BY TUNIS AIR FOR DC-10 ON TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC GROUNDS, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IF AIRBUS CHOSEN, IT WILL RESULT FROM POLITICAL PRESSURE OR FROM EXCEPTIONALLY FAVORABLE FRENCH FINANCING.

4. ACCORDING TUNIS AIR SOURCES, GOT NO LONGER SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING OLIVE OIL LINK TO PURCHASE OF DC-10 (75 TUNIS 6312).

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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